IUCC News & Notes
An Open and Affirming – Just Peace - Global Mission Congregation
A Progressive Christian Voice for Irvine and Southern California

IUCC bids Farewell to Annie & Tricia on August 9

Above photos are from the party on the patio after second service, below photos are of the standing ovations they received at both services
In the Life of IUCC ...

Lyle Norton & Wayne Banwell cleaned the fountain on a Buildings & Grounds work day, restoring the fountain to its natural beauty

L to R: Susan Sayre, Tom Ingraham, Bob Stalter, and Peggy Stalter served meals at Isaiah House as part of our Mission & Service Ministry

Above: Preschool cleanup
Below: The new video screens are installed!

Seekers Luncheon on August 18

Photos by Steve Goetz, Nancy Dreckman, and Tricia Aynes
From the Pastor’s Desk
the Rev. Dr. Paul Tellström

In just no time at all, we will be presenting a remarkable young woman as our featured guest. Rachel Held-Evans is one of the strongest new voices in the interpretation of Christianity for a new generation of American Christians, many of whom have been brought up either in Evangelical traditions or in no church tradition at all. She knows it well—she comes right from the town where the Scopes Monkey Trial was held. Rachel talks frankly about what it feels like to search for authenticity—places where people’s hearts are fully in their expressions of faith.

Have you had a chance to sign up yet? She’ll be here on September 11 and 12, and Dawn Price, the Rev. Mandy Fleming from the Laguna Beach United Methodist Church and I will be leading workshops after her presentation on Saturday.

Writing in her new book, Searching for Sunday/Loving, Leaving, and Finding the Church, she talks about what she has said when frequently asked why Millennials are leaving the church. She said, “Millennials want to be known by what we’re for, not just what we’re against.” Her book will be used by our Comma Groups as a jumping-off point for discussion this year.

I wonder if you might pick up on a difference I’ve begun to notice in the generation-gap between a younger demographic seeking to construct a belief-based Christianity that feels authentic, as opposed to a generation that is more interested in the facts than the search for belief—a quest that began in our churches with Albert Schweitzer’s Search for the Historical Jesus and lives on today in the authors that have come out of The Jesus Seminar. How will we make room and learn from for one another? This is the next generation of Christians coming up. These are the people now being known by the name, “Progressive Christians.”

I used this quote by Rachel in a recent sermon, and it is one of the reason’s I appreciate her writing so much: “We’re looking for a truer Christianity, a more authentic Christianity. Like every generation after, we’re looking for Jesus—the same Jesus who can be found in the strange places he’s always been found: in bread, in wine, in baptism, in Word, in suffering, in community, and among the least of these.”

The day after Rachel’s departure, Carl and I depart as well—for our 30th anniversary trip (also marking our first legal an-

While I am gone, Sarah Fiske-Phillips will be speaking on September 20, which is also the day of two big events. Our picnic in Mason park is always fun, and guests are invited. But that day is also an important occasion in Matthew Redrich’s professional calling. It is the day of his Ecclesiastical Council. When candidates for the ministry are deemed to be ready to present their credentials, a church council, comprised of neighboring churches in the Association, gets together to meet and question the candidate. Matthew will be one of three candidates presented on September 20. After he is finished being questioned, he will be excused, and the delegates will vote on whether or not to let him proceed towards being a candidate for ordination.

It is important that we have a group of members to support Matthew in San Diego that Sunday afternoon at 2:30. We are allowed four voting delegates, and we have two right now. If you can go, please speak with Matthew and Chris, or talk to me. More information is on page 10 of this issue.

On Sunday, September 27, the Rev. Priscilla Bizer will return to preach and to speak with members about the future needs of our congregation as they relate to our campus. The Rev. Bizer is the Executive Capital Campaign Consultant for the United Church of Christ, and is located in Cleveland.

I’m looking forward to being back with you all a few days after Priscilla preaches. The staff, led by John St. Marie, is challenging me to really make a bold and beautiful World Communion Sunday on Oct. 4, with breads from all parts of the world and the use of different languages and themes. It looks like our Worship Ministry has their work cut out for them!

One Last Word.
The Deacon Program has been working so well. My mitre’s off to all of you—I can see a change in how Sunday Morning is getting done in how Jerry Price has managed to bring all of the duties together under one program. This is something we need to continue. I know this is a pilot program, but it needs some time to run so that we can all see just how much this is benefitting IUCC.

We need some volunteers. This is a great way to get involved with your church. It is a wonderful way to get your foot in the door and begin to build relationships and get to know names and faces while feeling that you are serving the church on a real and immediate level. If you would like to know more about serving a shift as a Deacon, please speak to Jerry Price or me.

Pastor Paul
Just what you’ve been waiting for …

The UCC has a long history of support for environmental stewardship and justice. Therefore, we believe that it is beneficial for our congregation to have an organized group to connect our faith with our concerns regarding climate change. We have it! It is called GREENfaith.

Our mission is to inspire, educate and mobilize people for the care of the earth.

We believe …
- in the sacredness of nature
- people grow spiritually through a strong relationship with the earth
- all people deserve a healthy environment
- when we do damage to the land we do damage to the people, especially the poor
- our consumption habits can destroy or help heal and restore the earth
- the flourishing of humanity depends on the flourishing of the whole creation

As we Californians are aware, water is a major concern and is a current focus of our team. Only 1% of the water on earth is drinkable, with more and more water sources drying up each day. Note the Green Tips about water use in this newsletter. Watch for future Green Tips by our roving reporter in the newsletter and bulletin. Let us know if you have a Green Tip to share.

One immediate project is a “Battery Box” located on the welcome table just outside the church entry doors. Bring your used batteries (including hearing aid batteries) to church and we will properly dispose of them.

You GREENfaith team is looking forward to working with and for you.

Team members: Judy Curry, Nancy Dreckman, Howard Emery, Carol Getz, Eileen Vincent and Vivian Johnson, chair.

~ Vivian Johnson

GREENfaith Tip Photos

Michael Spindle: “Our newest home addition. Not the shower, the bucket! We refuse to let any more water go down the drain than necessary. We have turned off our backyard irrigation system and will now bucket water all plants. Our last water bill showed that we used 125 gallons of water per day, 1/3 of our daily allocation. We know we can do better… We can DO this!”

Succulents are a great alternative to water hogging plants!

Michael Spindle: “Rain wash - saving water by washing our cars in the much needed rain. It was GREAT fun, and water-wise!”

Tricia saves water by turning off the faucet when brushing her teeth.
Joe M: I don’t wash my car to save water and I shave while I shower.

Tricia A: I stopped wasting water by turning off the faucet while brushing my teeth.

Pat S: I collect my shower water in a basin while it’s getting warm.

Vinnie C: I recycle. I eat sustainable grown foods. I have a timer in my shower.

First Service Kids Sunday School: My whole family saves water with a bucket in the shower...The whole family recycles... I walk and forgo the car.

Chris R: I drive an electric car. There are no emissions.

Tom R: I’ve got a bucket in the shower to use to water the patio plants. I live in an apartment community which put in drought-tolerant plants.

Laura L: We put in solar panels. We keep the thermostat up high. It’s okay for the pets.

Ruby F: I’m assisting my husband, who is installing a direct water sprinkler system.

Mark F: I’m making an attempt to educate my grandchildren about the drought.

Second Service Kids Sunday School: We turn off all the lights and close all the doors when we leave the house... We use less water in the bathtub... The toilet has a function device, so it uses less water.

Sandy and Tom I: We changed our kitchen habits and cut back on water for plants. We got a connector that shuts the garden hose off.

And...I pray for the Earth every day.

Miss Lily

Miss Lily’s hat
Photos from our Ministry for Young People

Talented young filmmaker Ben Allen (R) shared a moment with his famous subject of “The Trout Project”

Dylan did a great job as Worship Leader

Sunday School fun

Photos courtesy of Sarah Fiske-Phillips
It's time to kick off the 2015-2016 IUCC Chancel Choir season! We are still looking for new friends to join our choir family. The IUCC Chancel Choir is a wonderful group of people who share their time and talents to create heartfelt, beautiful music for worship services as well as two concerts a year. Our first rehearsal is Thursday, September 10, at 7:15 p.m. Sundays we arrive at 9:00 a.m. and rehearse for a few minutes, then sing at both the 9:30 a.m. and 11:00 a.m. services.

Here's what some choir members had to say about their experience in the Chancel Choir:

- Cindy O’Dell – Pete Seger once said, “The easiest way to avoid wrong notes is to never open your mouth to sing. What a mistake that would be.” If wrong notes were strictly forbidden, none of us would be in the Chancel Choir. Of course, some people are amazing. But a lot of us are just ordinary...And yet, with practice and guidance, we still manage to make beautiful music. I've learned so much in my first year singing with the choir that I can't even put into words what it's meant to me. But I can say, if you want to sing, this is the safest, best way to challenge yourself and sing out - wrong notes and all.

- Keith Boyum – I pretty well joined the choir before I joined IUCC, in 1997. In the years since, the size and capacity of the choir have both grown, and I have especially enjoyed the musicianship brought to us by John St. Marie. John emphasizes the artistry, not just attention to tactics. It's a pleasure to sing.

- Kathi Smith – Attending choir practice each week is such an uplifting experience. The sense of community and connection with the Divine is palpable. John's joy is contagious, and I always feel enriched and renewed by the end of our practice.

- Judy Van Sise – Singing with the choir brings a peace to my soul and happiness to my heart. I may not be the greatest singer but I feel that I contribute to the whole of the choir.

- Susan Sherman – 2016 is my 30th year singing in the IUCC choir. It's amazing how this ministry has grown from only seven original members. There is no greater expression of life to me than giving the gift of music. I believe it is the language of the divine source. Every time I sing, I feel like I am sharing the purest message of creation with others. It is what motivates me every day and it is such a gift.

- Laura Long – Every year I learn something new under John's direction and through the supportive talents of my fellow singers. Countless times, I have looked at a complex, difficult piece of music, and thought, “This is impossible! I'll never be able to…!” Then the work – and fun – begins, and before you know it, we have all mastered the impossible and are ready to pass on the gift of music. It takes a patient, kind, positive, generous, and talented director to draw out the best in people and get results like that. And with John as a mentor, choir members learn to do the same for others.

Please contact John St. Marie at John@iucc.org for more information about joining us.

Joni Baker
Adult Education & Programs

Fall Event Updates

There are two big things going on at IUCC this fall in the area of Adult Education & Programs!

Comma Groups begin in September. We will be going through Rachel Held Evans latest book, Searching for Sunday.

Comma Group registration is now available online at iucc.org/register.

Books are available when you register or on Amazon.

Also in September, IUCC will be hosting our big Adult Education event—the Faith & Works Conference. Rachel Held Evans will be our keynote speaker. She will be joined by local voices including our very own Senior Minister, the Rev. Dr. Paul Tellström; IUCC Ministry Board Chair, Dawn Price; as well as the Rev. Mandy Sloan Flemming from Laguna Beach UMC.

The conference is on Friday, September 11 & Saturday, September 12. For full details on the conference, visit iucc.org/conference or contact Matthew by email matthew@iucc.org or via the church office.
“What is a prophet?” “How do you recognize a prophet?” “Do we still have prophets today?” “Could there be prophets in Orange County or even IUCC?” “If we really accept and believe the message of Jesus, what might a ‘good’ prophet sound like today?”

These and many other questions were discussed at George Johnson’s recently completed seminar about prophetic voices. Approximately 60 “prophet seekers” attended the insightful and provocative five week series. Inspiring lessons were learned about Gandhi, Bonhoeffer and King whose voices resonated with the participants.

All three of these powerful prophets came from middle-class families, were well educated, criticized much about organized religion, but respected all religions. They had great concern for creation and ecological issues and were proud patriots who became major voices for non-violence and resistance. Each evolved into a prophetic voice because of life-changing discoveries and all died while still active, with both Bonhoeffer and King being killed at age 39.

A great deal of thoughtful discussion led the group to identify the following issues they believed that a ‘good’ prophet would address today:

1. Economic inequities/world hunger
2. Social injustices
3. Protection and preservation of the environment
4. Opposition to war, promotion of peace
5. Challenging religious leaders to address the values and structures that have “messed up” the world

Prophets know the facts and understand future consequences. They are not afraid to speak out, rattle cages, and cannot be silenced or intimidated. They see God And Truth as one and the bottom line is always LOVE AND JUSTICE.

The challenging seminar ended with the participants asking themselves the following questions:

1. Who do I see as a ‘good’ prophet today—will I openly support him/her?
2. Am I reluctant to speak out because of my beliefs, lack of commitment or comfort level?
3. Am I willing to be a prophet and break my own silence?
4. Am I willing to make lifestyle changes that may be inconvenient or even demand a sacrifice?

The need for prophets is as great today as ever. Can we—individually or as a church of Christian believers—become one of these change agents? Do we have a choice? Elie Wiesel said it best “We have no choice. Indifference is a crime.”

The Rev. George Johnson teaching the class on Gandhi, King & Bonhoeffer
**Mark Your Calendar**

**Mark Your Calendar**

ISAIAH HOUSE SHELTER

**WED. * SEPT. 9 * 3:30 p.m.**

Contact Steve Goetz for details and to RSVP: sgoetz53@gmail.com.

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**September Birthdays**

Andrew Adkins
Lauren Adkins
Susan Allen
Cristina Arce-Jones
Kiana Austin
Maya Austin
Scott Bollens
Lavinia Cooper
Alyssa Cornett
Judy Curry
Ruby Fulton
Peggy Goetz
George Johnson
Vivian Johnson

David Karsten
Lizabeth Kerr
Susie Lang
Laura Long
JoAnne Mansell
Iris Mecartney
Aidan Mitchell
Jeff Oleson
Sofia Portillo
Suellen Rowe
Stephanie Sanders
Patricia Stalcup
Paul Thornton

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**COMMA GROUP REGISTRATION**

You may register online at [http://iucc.org/register](http://iucc.org/register). This year’s Comma Groups will meet for 7 monthly sessions (September, October, November, January, February, March, and April). We will discuss *Searching for Sunday* by Rachel Held Evans.

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**Pastor’s Potluck (6 p.m.) & Women’s Fellowship (7 p.m.)**

**WED. * SEPT. 2 *

Join us after the potluck for dessert and a talk by Ken Wyant on “Women of the Bible.”

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**CROP WALK FUNDRAISER**

**AT CALIFORNIA PIZZA KITCHEN * THURS. * SEPT. 10 *

On Sept. 10, CPK will donate 20% of the price of your meal to the CROP Hunger Walk. To qualify, you must present a flyer (these have been included in the Sunday bulletins). Choose from 1 of 3 locations: Alton Square, Fashion Island, or Tustin Market Place.

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**Matthew Redrich is seeking Ordination in the United Church of Christ. His Ecclesiastical Council will be held at University City UCC in San Diego. Ecclesiastical Councils require a quorum: 20 voting members, representing at least 1/3 of the churches, shall constitute a quorum. RSVP to the church office: (949) 733-0220.**

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**Coffee Hour Hosts Needed!**

We need hosts for coffee hour on Sundays. Please sign up on the patio.

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**Our Deacons program is off to a great start, but we could use more volunteers! This is a great way to serve your church and build relationships. If you would like to know more about becoming a Deacon, please speak to Jerry Price or Pastor Paul.**
I was a teacher for over 30 years. No matter how long I taught, there was something exciting and unique about the beginning of the school year - new students, new teaching strategies, new colleagues - a chance to begin anew. The nights before the first day of school, I would usually have vivid dreams about how I forgot to show up for school, or how I stood in front of my class with only my underwear on, or how I could not get my unruly students to quiet down. There is probably psychological significance in these dreams, but underlying all of them was a deep excitement about the beginning of the year.

Beginnings are indeed powerful times. That is true whether you are a teacher on fall’s first day, whether you are entering a new relationship, or moving to a new location, or starting a new job. That is true, too, here at IUCC. September marks the “beginning” of our year. Certainly, not the liturgical year or the calendar year, but the year in terms of both the return of events and the advent of new ones. Here are a few of those exciting, powerful beginnings that I encourage you to be part of:

Wednesday, September 2  at 6 p.m. marks the last Pastor’s Potluck of the summer. Join us on the patio behind the Child Care Center to share food and fellowship. Women’s Fellowship meets after the potluck in Plumer Hall to hear a talk by Ken Wyant on “Women of the Bible.”

September 10, CROP Walk Event at California Pizza Kitchen - you have to eat, so come to CPK and they will donate 20% of your check to the CROP Hunger Walk. A new CPK is at Alton and East Yale Loop. There are also locations at Fashion Island and the Tustin Market Place. Be sure to take the flyer from your Sunday bulletin.

Friday and Saturday, September 11 and 12 - Faith and Works Conference featuring Rachel Held Evans and our own Pastor Paul and Dawn Price as well as the Rev. Mandy Sloan Flemming from Laguna Beach UMC. What a wonderful opportunity to learn more in the company of other members from our church and the surrounding community. Details are at iucc.org/conference.

Sunday, September 20, ALL CHURCH PICNIC at Mason Park - after 2nd service join us for an afternoon of good food, good fun, and a great time! This annual event is a highlight of the “beginning” of the year. Plan to be there to reconnect with old friends and meet new ones!

Comma Group registration - Sign up NOW for this unique small group experience. Keith and I have been members of Comma groups since their inception 5 years ago. Through those groups we have met treasured friends, enjoyed great food, had thoughtful and invigorating discussions about our faith, and both received and given support through loving concern and prayers. Comma groups are like Sunday morning at church, but in a more intimate way with a small group of caring others. You can register online at iucc.org/register. I promise you that will this be one of the best things you’ve ever done for yourself!

September 23-27, visit of Priscilla Bizer - Priscilla is a consultant on capital campaigns for the UCC, our denomination. She will be visiting with us during this time and will be preaching on Sunday, September 27. As we still await word on our Conditional Use Permit from the city of Irvine, we need to be thinking and planning for our next steps. Priscilla will give us expert guidance and insights on what those next steps might look like. Plan to be in church on September 27!

There are so many other beginnings - Sunday School kick-off, a new year of practice for our choir and welcoming them back to our Sunday morning services, new banners, a new screen in the sanctuary - the list is endless! Embrace this “beginning” of our church year - join in, try something new, make a new friend or two, be renewed! Whatever you do, plan to be part of this special place I call my church family and home!

In Faith and Community,

Renae
Building Plan Update
by Anne Rosse

Just the other day, I was perusing the IUCC website, reading about our founding. Begun in 1979 as a new church of the United Church of Christ Southern California Conference, the early IUCC congregation (of approximately 20 people) met initially in a local elementary school until the first building (now called Plumer Hall) was constructed in 1986. To accommodate a growing congregation, the current sanctuary was completed in 1996. It struck me as especially fitting that in 2016 (note yet another year ending in a 6!), the IUCC congregation will decide if it ready to further the vision of our founders by expanding our church campus.

More than a year ago, we submitted our vision for a new church campus (the IUCC Master Plan) to the City of Irvine for a Modified Conditional Use Permit, the next step in our planning process. After many reviews and exchanges, the City is satisfied with the plan itself. And, our plan was endorsed by the Woodbridge Village Association. All that remains is for the City to accept a required traffic study. Over the summer, we have been in dialogue with the City about the traffic study, providing requested data and answering their questions and concerns. Once they accept the traffic study, we anticipate the whole project undergoing a final administrative review, with subsequent approval sometime soon thereafter. When that happens, we’ll be sure to announce it promptly and look forward to a church-wide celebration of this milestone!

If you’d like to review the Master Plan, please click to: http://iucc.org/portal/documents/.

While we’ve been in dialogue with the City of Irvine, we’ve also been preparing for a visit from Priscilla Bizer in late September. Priscilla is our UCC capital campaign consultant and through preaching, holding a forum, and meeting with folks, she will help us understand what a campaign would be like and how it would benefit IUCC. We anticipate asking the congregation in January 2016 (at the Winter Congregational Meeting) if we are ready to undertake a campaign to fund the first phase of the Master Plan, which includes: new administrative and meeting space, a welcoming church frontage, enhanced patio space for fellowship, and other benefits. If yes, the campaign could begin as early as February. If successful, we could be asking the congregation for its endorsement to move forward in May 2016. We’ve been advised that from the time we decide to move forward with building, it will be 6-9 months for planning/permitting/bidding and 18-24 months to occupancy (from the original decision date). So, conceivably, we could be looking at shovels in the ground in early 2017, best case scenario.

I’ve been thinking a lot about what these new buildings and grounds will mean to IUCC. For me, personally, the new campus will serve as the physical embodiment of how I view the “UCC Comma.” At IUCC, we use a comma in our logo in help remind us of the Gracie Allen quote, “Never place a period where God has placed a comma.” The comma is a way to proclaim that while our faith is 2000 years old, our thinking is not. It invites us to believe that God speaks through other people, nature, music, art, a theorem, the Bible and in so many other ways. Here at IUCC, we believe that God is still speaking. The new campus will be an even better embodiment than our current campus – a commitment to our legacy and future while creating a campus that reflects the church we strive to be – an oasis of Progressive Christianity for Orange County and beyond, dedicated to serving our neighbors and sharing our message of extravagant welcome, hospitality and love.

Turning again to the IUCC website, I found this lovely message which does a fabulous job of representing what we’re all about here at IUCC:

“Relying on God’s grace and the support of its members, IUCC is committed to being open and inclusive, welcoming everyone. We have put aside dogmatic doctrine to endorse and encourage a personal spiritual pilgrimage built on a foundation of an affirmative and supportive Christian family. Concerned and progressive, we are committed to improving the human condition both locally and throughout the world. You are invited to continue your faith journey and your ministry of service for others with us at IUCC.”

Just recently, I was privileged to take on new responsibilities related to a possible capital campaign - Renae Boyum, who was serving in this role, has stepped up to serve as IUCC’s new moderator (lucky IUCC!). So, from my new role, I look forward to chatting with you more about this project. I invite you to think about what a new church campus could mean to IUCC. I’d love to hear your thoughts on this topic – so please don’t hesitate to contact me or stop me on the patio. Meanwhile, I’ll hope to be able to share news of our approval from the City of Irvine soon. Stay tuned!